

## WOULD YOU MAKE A GOOD ROOMMATE?

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By dan the roommate man

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If you have decided to live with someone else, the most important thing to do is to take a good look at yourself as a potential roommate. Set aside at least an hour of your time to sit down with a piece of paper and a pencil and do some serious introspection. Don't skip this part, it's really valuable.

List Your Assets.

Start with the good stuff and give yourself a pat on the back. Make a list of all of the "pluses" you will bring to a roommate relationship. Here are a few examples, but take time to think up your own. Make sure you cover all three categories:

Personal: Sense of humor, ability to listen, non-smoker, morning person, etc.

Technical: Knowledge of plumbing, phenomenal cook, etc.

Material: Stereo, car, living room furniture, etc.

List Your Faults.

Now that you know you're not such a bad person, consider what "minuses" you will bring to a relationship. Be as honest as you would want your roommate to be with you. (If you can't seem to think of anything, you are kidding yourself). Again, here are a few examples to start you thinking:

Personal: Moodiness, sloppiness, you think all Beethoven music is just random noise, etc.

Technical: You can't change a light bulb, don't know a carburetor from a radiator, etc.

Material: No furniture, cooking utensils, TV or stereo.

What Are Your Needs?

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What do you want out of a roommate relationship, and what must you have? For example, must you have your own room? Do you fall apart if you don't sleep between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.? This list is vital, so take your time.

Now Evaluate.

Take a good look at your lists and consider your priorities. What is there about you or your lifestyle that is absolutely crucial to you? If you have always been a slob/ smoker/ morning person, whatever, don't kid yourself into thinking you can change now. If you want to change, great! But don't decide to live with someone who is allergic to smoke just to see if it will make you quit. By the same token, decide what things you might be willing to compromise on to suit your roommate's tastes. Giving these

matters some thought ahead of time will make it a lot easier when you actually start interviewing prospective roommate

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## **CAN MY CURRENT ROOMMATE JUST THROW ME OUT?**

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QUESTION:

I feel that I am being wrongly evicted from our apartment by another roommate who claims to be the only one on the lease. I'm pretty sure I signed it, too, but I can't remember.

ANSWER:

The first thing to do is to get a copy of that lease. Start with the landlord, who probably has a copy (and state law may require him to give you a copy if you request it). If you're on the lease, your roommate cannot get you out — only landlords can evict tenants.

Now, suppose you're not on the lease. All is not lost. If the landlord has treated you as a tenant — by accepting rent directly, for example, or putting your name on the mailbox or doorbell — you may have attained the status of a tenant. Surely, if you and the roommate rented the place together and it was clear that you were on equal footing, you should be given the status of a tenant.

Once you are a tenant, a co-tenant such as your roommate cannot evict you. Only the landlord can do that.

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